

the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church in the United States, Bishop Spong fought for the integrity of Christ Hospital for more than 22 years. Under his direction, the hospital has grown and matured into the remarkable institution it is today.

In addition to his remarkable work for the hospital, Bishop Spong has served as president of the New Jersey Council of Churches and as theological consultant on a variety of diocesan committees and commissions. For all of his efforts, Bishop Spong was named "1999 Humanist of the Year."

Bishop Spong, married to Christine Spong, is the father of three and the grandfather of four.

For more than two decades of dedicated service to Christ Hospital and more than three decades of religious guidance, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Bishop Spong a happy and healthy retirement. His remarkable leadership and inspiring work ethic will be missed.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF WILLIAM
J. BRESNAN

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA
OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 27, 2000

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a good friend, Mr. Bill Bresnan, who has been, over the past 40 years, a primary leader in the growth of the cable television industry, not only in my home town of Bay City, MI, but throughout the Midwest, including Minnesota, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Kansas, and Illinois. Under his leadership, Bresnan Communications has also become known for its many educational programs, its emphasis on minority advancement, and for community relations initiatives that recognize the civic contributions of local citizens and seniors.

A native of Mankato, MN, Bill Bresnan began his career in 1958 when, at the age of 25, he designed and built his first cable system in Rochester, MN, for a group of local investors. That company was acquired by Jack Kent Cooke, Inc. in 1965, and Bill was appointed its vice president of engineering. Shortly thereafter, he was appointed to serve as its executive vice president.

From 1972 to 1982, Bill held various influential positions in the Teleprompter Corporation, which was then one of the largest cable organizations in the United States. These include president of Teleprompter's Cable Division, Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. In 1981, when Teleprompter was bought by Westinghouse Electric Corp., he was appointed chairman and chief executive officer of the resulting new company, Group W Cable, Inc.

During this time, Bill played a major role in helping advance cutting-edge technology in the burgeoning cable industry. He was instrumental in sending the first domestic satellite transmission using a Canadian ANIK satellite in 1973. Three years later he helped initiate the first commercial communications system in the United States to use optical fibers.

In 1984, Bill founded Bresnan Communications, which currently serves over 660,000 customers. The company's Midwestern market is not accidental, and is a good example of Bill's civic-minded business philosophy. Bill has made it a priority to invest in the small and medium sized communities in America's heartland, to make sure that cutting-edge technology does not bypass these hard-working Americans, in favor of large communities on the west or east coasts of the United States.

Bill has also made it a priority to invest in America's young adults. He was an early pioneer in the development and construction of interactive television networks for distant learning. Working with local school districts and colleges, Bill was a key motivator in connecting educational facilities via fiber and coaxial cable, enabling many schools to conduct fully interactive classes simultaneously across great distances.

The admiration and respect of Bresnan employees for their president is legendary within the industry. Bill is known as an extraordinarily generous person and a boss who sees all of his 1,400 employees as his equal. He allocates a significant percent of revenue to establishing and promoting community relations initiatives that recognize local senior citizens and minorities. Indeed, his commitment to advancing the interests of minorities—in their recruitment, placement and training—was recognized in September 1999 by the Walter Kaitz Foundation. Bill received the "Partnership in Diversity" award, one of the industry's highest honors.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that there are not many businessmen today who are as committed to the technological advancements of the future as Mr. Bill Bresnan. There are not many who feel the necessity of bringing advancements to those who might not otherwise have access to them: Americans on the family farm in Michigan, or minorities, or school children in the Midwest. Bill Bresnan has many plans for the future, and I wish him much success in all his endeavors. I am positive, Mr. Speaker, that we in Michigan will be the grateful beneficiaries.

IN SUPPORT OF BROADENING THE
TYPES OF PROPERTY SUBJECT
TO CIVIL ASSET FORFEITURE IN
ALIEN SMUGGLING CASES

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 27, 2000

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, my bill addresses the pernicious practice of alien smuggling. Alien smugglers are a huge problem in South Florida, especially those who bring passengers from Haiti and Cuba to South Florida, frequently in unsafe boats and under very dangerous conditions.

For example, in March of last year, an alien smuggler's boat sank off the coast of West Palm Beach, Florida and, depending upon whether the Coast Guard or press reports of this horrendous tragedy are to be believed, anywhere from 15 to 40 Haitian passengers drowned.

These heartless and inhumane alien smugglers are parasites who are making huge sums of money off of the suffering of Haitians and Cubans who seek any means, legal or otherwise, to come to the United States. We must provide law enforcement with all available remedies to assure that the smugglers cannot continue to exploit vulnerable communities such as the Haitians and the Cubans. Unfortunately, the existing civil asset forfeiture provisions for alien smuggling are far more limited than those available to address drug offenses.

Current law authorizes the forfeiture of vehicles, vessels and aircraft used to commit alien smuggling offenses. This has proven to be an essential law enforcement tool that the INS uses more than 12,000 times a year. But the law has some glaring loopholes. We know that other types of property besides vessels, vehicles and aircraft are also used to facilitate alien smuggling offenses, but these other types of property currently are not subject to civil asset forfeiture.

For example, alien smugglers use electronic gear to monitor law enforcement activity directed against alien smuggling. The smugglers also own warehouses where vehicles, vessels, and even human beings are stashed to avoid detection by the Coast Guard or the Border Patrol. Yet these other types of property currently are not subject to civil asset forfeiture.

Current law also does not permit the forfeiture of the proceeds of an alien smuggling offense. If a smuggler is paid \$100,000 to bring people into the United States in his fishing boat, law enforcement should not be limited to taking the boat while letting the smuggler keep the \$100,000. The smuggler should be required to surrender the cash as well.

My bill corrects these deficiencies by expanding the scope of permissible civil asset forfeiture in alien smuggling cases to make it consistent with the standards used in drug cases. My bill provides that any property that constitutes, is derived from, or is traceable to the proceeds obtained directly or indirectly from alien smuggling, or is used to facilitate, or is intended to be used to facilitate alien smuggling, is subject to civil asset forfeiture.

Mr. Chairman, I don't fault those who would take extraordinary steps to try to come to the United States. Their efforts are totally understandable, even though unacceptable. I fault those who bring them to the United States outside of the law—the alien smugglers. Alien smugglers are a menace to society. As in drug cases, we should give law enforcement the full range of asset forfeiture remedies to deal with the serious problem of alien smuggling.

In civil asset forfeiture proceedings, law enforcement should have the ability to reach any property owned by the smugglers that is used to facilitate alien smuggling or that derives from or is traceable to such smuggling. There is no logical reason to limit the types of property subject to forfeiture in alien smuggling cases to vehicles, vessels and aircraft.

I urge my colleagues to support this common-sense bill.